

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 SAA-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 DLOS-09 ACDA-12
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R 281529Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4495
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LODON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMECONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION SINAI

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E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT PEPR IS
SUBJ: GOVERNMENT DEFEATS NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION ON FOREIGN POLICY

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 9424, (B) TEL AVIV 9191

1. IN A LACKLUSTER REPETITION OF THE JULY 24 FOREIGN POLICY
DEBATE, THE GOVERNMENT ON JULY 26 EASILY DEFEATED A MOTION
OF NO-CONFIDENCE SUBMITTED BY THE ALIGNMENT. THE VOTE WAS
70-35 AGAINST THE MOTION, WITH THREE SINGLE-MEMBER OPPOSI-
TION PARTIES ABSTAINING. THE ALIGNMENT MOTION WAS PRESENTED
BY ABBA EBAN, WHO ATTACKED THE AUTONOMY PLAN AS ANNEXA-
TIONIST IN INTENT. DEPARTING FROM HIS USUAL EXTEMPORANEOUS
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FORM OF DELIVERY, EBAN READ A CAREFULLY WORDED TEXT IN
WHICH HE MADE IT STARKLY CLEAR THAT THE PRINCIPAL GAP
BETWEEN THE LIKUD POLICY AND THAT OF LABOR IS OVER THE
QUESTION OF WHETHER ISRAEL WILL BE ULTIMATELY WILLING
TO RETURN SIGNIFICANT PORTIONS OF THE WEST BANK TO ARAB
RULE.

2. ANSWERING FOR THE GOVERNMENT, MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO MOSHE NISSIM SAID THAT THE ALIGNMENT WAS MISLEADING THE PUBLIC BY ADVOCATING TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE BECAUSE THE EGYPTIANS HAD REJECTED SUCH A COMPROMISE OUTRIGHT AT THE LEEDS CASTLE CONFERENCE. EBAN INSISTED THAT, ON THE CONTRARY, SADAT'S NEW WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT BORDER RECTIFICATIONS IN THE WEST BANK MEANS THAT EGYPT HAS NOW ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE, WITHOUT ARTICULATING IT IN THOSE TERMS.

3. IN THE COURSE OF THE DEBATE, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM NISSIM, LABOR PARTY SECRETARY BAR-LEV ASSERTED THAT THE LABOR PARTY CONTINUES TO REGARD THE JORDAN RIVER AS ISRAEL'S SECURITY BOUNDARY, ITS ADVOCACY OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE NOTWITHSTANDING.

4. COMMENT: THE FACT THAT THE CABINET SELECTED THE UNPREPOSSESSING NISSIM TO RESPOND TO THE NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION WHILE BEGIN DID NOT SPEAK DURING THE DEBATE SEEMED CALCULATED TO CONVEY AN IMPRESSION OF THE LIKUD'S DISDAIN FOR THE ALIGNMENT'S EFFORT. THIS IS CERTAINLY THE VIEW OF LABOR PARTY LEADERS. ANOTHER FACTOR MAY HAVE BEEN A LIKUD DECISION TO COOL THE ATMOSPHERE FOLLOWING THE EMOTIONAL AND AT TIMES RAUCOUS DEBATES OF JULY 19 AND 24 (REFTELS). IN ANY EVENT, LABOR WILL CONTINUE TO CHIP AWAY AT WHAT IT SEES AS BEGIN'S VULNERABILITY ON THE QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPROMISE, PARTICULARLY IF SADAT'S CALL FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE ISRAELI MILITARY TEAM FROM ALEXANDRIA PROVES TO BE A HARBINGER OF SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition History: n/a
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